



Congressman Tim Bishop

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FEDS HELP SECURE FIRST ROUND OF DREDGING PERMITS

Five permits granted so far for Suffolk County

Suffolk County, New York – Following multiple high-level interventions, Congressman Tim Bishop and Senators Charles Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton announced today the approval of the first round of dredging permits for Suffolk County. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has issued permits for North Sea Harbor in Southampton, Cedar Beach Inlet in Southold, Little Creek in Southold, Fresh Pond in Southampton, and Miamogue Lagoon in Riverhead.

“The dredging permit process this year has needlessly caused major headaches for government officials and local residents,” said Bishop. “I am pleased that we have finally made some headway in clearing bureaucratic hurdles. However, we must continue to resolve the causes of this year’s delays so that they do not recur in the future.”

“This is a major breakthrough for local communities, which have been entangled in bureaucratic red tape for far too long,” said Schumer. “Now, key Long Island waterways can be dredged, improving navigation and protecting our precious beaches. We will closely monitor the status of the remaining dredging permits to ensure a smooth and expeditious completion of this project.”

“The dredging of Suffolk County’s creeks and inlets is vital to the health of our waterways and the safety of Long Island’s boating community. This decision is long overdue and has cost the community valuable time to fix the problem but I am pleased that the Army Corps has finally released these five permits,” said Clinton. “This is the right thing for the Army Corps to do and I will continue to work so that additional permits are released in the coming months.”

Undredged waterways affect thousands of Long Islanders by trapping boaters in creeks at low tide, breeding mosquitoes, and producing strong odors from accumulated seaweed and mud.

Suffolk and other municipalities were denied approval for many dredging projects earlier this year due to miscommunications over changing requirements in the permitting process. To address the growing crisis, Bishop, Schumer and Clinton facilitated a series of interagency meetings.

As a result, Suffolk County was able to negotiate a deal with the Army Corps for permission to dredge 15 creeks, canals and inlets in the towns of Riverhead, Southold and Southampton, starting on Oct. 1 and going through Jan. 15, 2008.